

**WETHERSFIELD PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION  
PUBLIC HEARING AND MEETING**

**November 19, 2013**

The Wethersfield Planning and Zoning Commission held a public hearing and meeting on Tuesday, November 19, 2013 at 7:00 p.m. in the Wethersfield Town Council Chambers located at Town Hall, 505 Silas Deane Highway, Wethersfield, Connecticut 06109.

**1. CALL TO ORDER:**

Chairman Roberts called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m.

**1.1 ROLL CALL & SEATING OF ALTERNATES (5 members required for a quorum):**

Clerk Margiotta called the roll as follows:

Member Name	Present	Absent	Excused
Richard Roberts, Chairman	✓		
Thomas Harley, Vice Chairman	✓		
Antonio Margiotta, Clerk	✓		
James Hughes			✓
George Oickle	✓		
Joseph Hammer			✓
Anthony Homicki	✓		
Dave Edwards			✓
Angelo Robert Fazzina			✓
Thomas Dean (alternate)	✓*		
Alex Vasel (alternate)			✓
Leigh Standish (alternate)	✓		

Also present: Peter Gillespie, Town Planner/Economic Development Manager;  
and Denise Bradley, Assistant Planner

Chairman Roberts noted at the time of roll call there were (5) full members and two (2\*) alternate members in attendance (\*with Commissioner Dean arriving at 7:08 p.m.). All members present to participate.

Members of the Public were present.

**2. OLD BUSINESS:**

**2.1 APPLICATION NO. 1809-13-Z: Peter S. Brzezicki** recently approved home occupation (Accounting & Tax Office) seeking sign review at 239 Griswold Road.

Applicant, Peter S. Brzezicki, 239 Griswold Road, had appeared before the Commission on November 12, 2013 regarding the special permit portion of this Application [The Special Permit, in accordance with Section 3.5.2 of the Wethersfield Zoning Regulations, is to operate a home occupation (Accounting & Tax Office) at 239 Griswold Road] which was granted at said meeting. The Applicant now appeared before the Commission for a review of the proposed sign for aforesaid business. The Applicant explained that the sign of five (5) square feet [25"x28"] would be attached to an existing lamppost located in the front yard of the property. The double sided, plywood sign would have a white

background with black/red letters, and the lettering would read the same on both sides. The sign would be attached to the lamppost by a metal bracket. The upper sign [approximate area, 4 square feet – 28” wide by 20” high] would read: BRZEZICKI ACCOUNTING & TAX SERVICES. The lower sign [approximate area, 1 square foot – 26” wide by 5” high] would read: WALK-INS WELCOME. The lower sign would be detachable and would only be present during tax season (February 1-April 15).

Commissioner Oickle inquired and the Applicant indicated the address numbers on the pole (facing the street from the front) will be moved (facing north) to the first direct side of the pole.

Commissioner Oickle inquired and Mr. Gillespie indicated that although the Application is not typical of the special permit Application granted for the site, the proposed sign is akin to a family name sign, for example, being posted on a lamppost.

Chairman Roberts mentioned and Commissioners Margiotta and Oickle concur the “walk-ins welcome” portion of the sign contradicts the limited hours presented in the special permit Application that was granted. He noted that having a walk-in mechanism to the business can result in a loss of control in the number of clients visiting the site. The Applicant mentioned the “walk-ins welcome” portion of the sign is a reaction to Town Regulations not allowing a business phone number to be posted on a sign.

Commissioner Homicki indicated a precedent could be set by allowing “walk-ins welcome” on signage at home occupation locations. He mentioned omitting the walk-ins portion being eliminated.

Mr. Gillespie clarified that lawn signs can have contact information, as they are for contractors who are located temporarily at a site.

Commissioner Standish noted having the phone number on a home occupation sign would constitute a solicitation rather than an identification of the business and thus belongs in the paper rather than on the property. He suggested the Applicant not include the “walk-ins welcome” language.

Chairman Roberts noted there would be consistency going forward in Applications of this type if the “walk-ins welcome” language was not included.

Commissioner Dean mentioned the “walk-ins welcome” portion of the sign tends not to conform to the general sense of the special permit application as presented and approved at the last meeting. However, the word “welcome” in that portion of the sign is not of concern and is encouraged.

**Motion:** Commissioner Oickle made a motion to approve **APPLICATION NO. 1809-13-Z: Peter S. Brzezicki** recently approved home occupation (Accounting & Tax Office) seeking sign review at 239 Griswold Road with the condition that the lower portion of the sign’s language “Walk-Ins Welcome” is eliminated and changed to “Welcome”.

**Second:** Vice Chairman Harley seconded the motion.

Aye: Roberts, Harley, Margiotta, Oickle, Homicki, Dean, Standish;

Nay: None;

Vote: 7 – 0;

**Application Approved with a condition.**

**3. NEW BUSINESS:**

There was no New Business discussed at this meeting.

**4. OTHER BUSINESS:**

**4.1** A discussion regarding the implementation of the 2013 Plan of Conservation and Development.

Mr. Gillespie provided the Commissioners a one and a half (1½) page Memo dated November 15, 2013 to the Planning & Zoning Commission noting language in the Plan from page 91 regarding the establishing of a Plan Implementation Committee. In response to this language, Staff is suggesting that the principal members of the Committee to include representation from Town Council, PZC, EDIC, Redevelopment, Parks and Recreation, Conservation Commission, HDC, CIAC, Town Planner, Physical Services, Town Engineer, Town Manager, Recreation Director and Resident Representative.

Commissioner Standish suggested two (2) additional resident representatives be added to the aforesaid Committee.

Chairman Roberts suggested two PZC members and an alternate be included in the aforesaid Committee and that a Joint Meeting with PZC and Town Council be held to discuss matters relating to the Plan.

Commissioner Oickle suggested representation from groups mentioned in paragraph one include a member of that group and an alternate.

Chairman Roberts, Mr. Gillespie, and the Commissioners agreed that Plan Implementation Committee meetings would likely occur on a monthly basis to start and eventually lead to quarterly meetings thereafter. Mr. Gillespie noted a report would likely follow each meeting.

Commissioner Homicki noted priorities have to be set, as some priorities may be accomplished procedurally by Staff and/or set by Town Council (as budget and urgency allow). He also indicated it needs to be known who will champion which of the priorities.

Vice Chairman Harley inquired and Mr. Gillespie indicated the meetings of the Plan Implementation Committee would occur in the evening.

Vice Chairman Harley inquired and Mr. Gillespie indicated participation ex-officio or voting is not an issue, as the Plan Implementation Committee's function is for project discussion, prioritization, commitment (occurrence of people taking the lead), and existence of support in order to move said projects forward.

Commissioner Standish noted the aforesaid group is an implementation group and therefore voting is not necessary.

Commissioner Homicki inquired and Mr. Gillespie indicated there are Town Council members who have a copy of the Plan. Commissioner Homicki suggested all Town Council members receive a hard copy of this Plan.

Mr. Gillespie will speak with the Town Manager, Mayor and liaison to Town Council of attending a future PZC meeting to discuss the matter further.

Commissioner Standish agreed a meeting with the new Town Council This issue and any other issues they may wish to jointly and develop policy (exchange ideas).

**4.2** A discussion regarding PA 12-55 – An Act Concerning the Palliative Use of Marijuana.

The Commissioners and Mr. Gillespie last discussed this issue in September 2013, which was prior to the release of the Connecticut State Department of Public Protection's regulations regarding this issue. Mr. Gillespie was then given the task of further research on this issue. The Planning Department was approached with inquiries by two (2) potential licensees for two (2) dispensary locations in Town, and those parties did not file applications to locate here. Ms. Bradley provided a copy of an article found in today's *Hartford Courant* noting there were forty-two (42) applications filed (due Friday, November 15, 2013) to grow or sell medical marijuana. The state expects to award three to five (3-5) licenses for dispensaries and three (3) licenses to producers around the beginning of the year. Mr. Gillespie referred to his Memo to the PZC dated November 15, 2013, where he summarized findings of other CT communities regarding PA 12-55. Many towns on the Gold Coast (Fairfield County) adopted moratoriums in order to further research the issue and create a more formalized position on the issue. Some areas have approved areas. The Planning Department's research extends to how other states have treated the issue. The common theme is that from a regulatory point of view, these matters use distance from bars, package stores, churches, schools, etc. in the consideration process. Preliminary research suggests that when utilizing 1000 foot separation distance, there may be areas in Town as compliance locations. The language proposed by the Planning Department to be possibly considered by PZC (with nothing less than a special permit) does not include the State regulations of approximately 76 pages.

Commissioner Standish requested additional restrictive language to proposed Town Regulations that would avoid the hastening of PA 12-55 businesses locating in the North end of the Silas Deane Highway. Mr. Gillespie noted separation distance to residential properties and/or an increase in the separation distance requirement could respond to the request.

Commissioner Dean suggested an approach to this matter of dovetailing with State policy rather than looking at the issue in terms of liquor store regulation (i.e. take small steps in regulatory process). Mr. Gillespie noted the State will utilize proximity criteria.

Commissioner Oickle inquired and Mr. Gillespie indicated that if no regulatory action was taken by the Town at this time, an interpretation by the zoning officer would be made if, for example, the dispensary was a pharmacy/retail space.

Commissioner Homicki indicated his interest in knowing the secondary impact details of activity, taxable revenue, etc., as well as regulations adopted in other Towns.

Clerk Margiotta inquired and Mr. Gillespie indicated that a position on PA 12-55 should be taken in the near future.

Chairman Roberts indicated that a position should be taken within the next six to eight (6-8) months in order to effectively respond to the next potential round of applications in 2014.

Mr. Gillespie and the Planning office will continue to work on this matter and will return to the Commission in the near future with additional findings.

**5. MINUTES – October 1, 2013 and November 5, 2013 Planning & Zoning Commission Meeting Minutes**

**October 1, 2013 Planning & Zoning Commission Meeting Minutes**

**Motion:** Vice Chairman Harley motioned to approve the minutes, as submitted.

**Second:** Commissioner Standish seconded the motion.

Aye: Roberts, Harley, Margiotta, Oickle, Dean, Standish;

Nay: None;

Vote: 6 – 0;

Commissioner Homicki did not participate in the vote, as he was not present for the Planning & Zoning Commission Meeting of October 1, 2013.

**October 1, 2013 Planning & Zoning Commission Meeting Minutes approved as submitted.**

**November 5, 2013 Planning & Zoning Commission Meeting Minutes**

**Motion:** Vice Chairman Harley motioned to approve the minutes, as submitted.

**Second:** Commissioner Standish seconded the motion.

Aye: Harley, Margiotta, Oickle, Homicki, Dean;

Nay: None;

Vote: 5 – 0;

Chairman Roberts and Commissioner Standish did not participate in the vote, as they were not present for the Planning & Zoning Commission Meeting of November 5, 2013.

**November 5, 2013 Planning & Zoning Commission Meeting Minutes approved as submitted.**

**6. STAFF REPORTS:**

Mr. Gillespie informed the Commissioners of The Wethersfield Economic Development & Improvement Commission's upcoming **24<sup>th</sup> Annual Holiday Social & Salute to Business** event which will be held at Wethersfield Country Club (76 Country Club Road, Wethersfield) on Thursday, December 12, 2013, from 5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. (R.S.V.P. by Tuesday, December 3). The cost is \$20.00 per person.

**7. PUBLIC COMMENTS ON GENERAL MATTERS OF PLANNING AND ZONING:**

There were no public comments made at this meeting regarding general matters of planning and zoning.

**8. CORRESPONDENCE:**

**8.1** A copy of the November Planning & Economic Development Report.

**9. PENDING APPLICATIONS TO BE HEARD AT FUTURE MEETINGS:**

At the time of this meeting, there were no pending Applications to be heard at future meetings.

**10. ADJOURNMENT:**

**Motion:** Commissioner Homicki motioned to adjourn the meeting at 8:11 p.m.

**Second:** Commissioner Standish seconded the motion.

Aye: Roberts, Harley, Margiotta, Oickle, Homicki, Dean, Standish;

Nay: None;

Vote: 7 – 0;

Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,  
Ellen Goslicki, Recording Secretary